The Conference Board

Economics Program

MONTHLY UPDATE TO

International Economic Scoreboard

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board — August 1990

FATIGUED CYCLE

Globally, the business cycle continues on a steady expansionary course at a moderate pace, while the leading index continues nearly flat. These developments, however, all predate the Middle-East crisis, which is a negative influence for almost all of these countries.

Regionally, Europe and the Pacific region both are experiencing steady growth in economic activity, but their leading indexes are advancing at just a 2 percent rate. In North America, the leaders also show 2 percent growth, but the performance index is up only a single point from a year ago.

Nationally, the proportion of minus signs on the summary table below continues to build. The performance index in Taiwan shows a negative growth rate and Australia's is a flat zero, while those for the U.S. and Canada are only one and two percent. In the other seven countries the performance index growth rates are four percent or above, but even in these countries the leading indexes are growing much more slowly or declining. Prospects for slower growth are widespread.

Summary Of Growth Rates, Eleven Industrial Countries

	Ten-year Growth Rate	Indexes of Economic Performance Growth Rates*			Leading Business Cycle Indexes Growth Rates*			Current Reading on the Cycle	Latest Month Covered
	1976-86	6 mos ago	3 mos ago	Latest month	6 mos ago	3 mos ago	Latest month		
	annual rates, percent								
Eleven countries	3	4	4	4	2	0	2	Expansion continuing	May
Ten countries excl. U.S.	3	6	7	6	3	2	2	Expansion continuing	May
North America (2)	3	1	1	1	0	-3	2	Expansion continuing	May
Europe (4)	2	6	7	6	0	1	2	Expansion continuing	May
Pacific Region (5)	4	7	7	7	7	5	2	Expansion continuing	May
United States	3	1	2	2	-1	0	1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	June
Canada	3	2	2	1	-1	-1	-3	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	May
West Germany	2	6	8	5	4	6	4	Expansion continuing	June/May
France	2	8	7	6	-3	-3	3	Expansion continuing	May/June
United Kingdom	2	5	5	4	-4	-1	-1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	June/May
Italy	2	5	6	6	1	-1	1	Expansion resuming, leaders weak	Apr
Japan	4	7	8	8	8	5	3	Expansion continuing	June/May
Australia	3	7	2	0	-3	-4	-3	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	June
Taiwan, R.O.C.	8	4	2	-1	7	9	-1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	June
Korea, R.O.K.	7	8	15	8	1	5	-1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	June
New Zealand	2	0	3	6	5	1	1	Upturn resuming, leaders weak	May

* Ratio of current month's index to average index over the preceding 12 months, expressed as a compound annual rate.

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INDEXES, WORLDWIDE AND BY REGION, 1989-90

		11 Countries		10 Countries excl. U.S.		North America (2)		Europe (4)		Pacific Region (5)	
		Indexes 1980 = 100									
		Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
Jan.	89	130	138	132	137	127	138	122	124	148	160
Feb.	89	130	138	132	138	127	136	122	124	148	162
Mar.	89	131	138	134	137	128	138	123	124	151	160
Apr.	89	131	138	133	137	128	138	123	124	149	160
May	89	131	138	134	137	128	138	123	125	150	158
June	89	132	138	135	138	128	137	124	125	152	160
July	89	132	138	135	138	128	137	124	125	152	162
Aug.	89	133	139	136	139	128	138	125	124	153	165
Sept.	89	133	139	136	139	128	138	126	125	154	165
Oct.	89	133	139	137	139	128	138	126	124	154	165
Nov.	89	134	139	138	139	128	138	127	124	156	166
Dec.	89	134	139	139	140	128	137	128	124	157	167
Jan.	90	135	139	140	140	128	136	129	125	158	167
Feb.	90	135	136	140	140	129	135	130	125	159	168
Mar.	90	136	139	141	140	129	137	130	125	160	166
Apr.	90	136	139	142	140	129	136	130	125	161	165
May	90	136	140	142	140	129	136	131	126	161	166

	11 Countries		10 Countries excl. U.S.		North America (2)		Europe (4)		Pacific Region (5)	
	Growth Rates, Percent									
	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
Jan. 89	6	7	7	8	4	4	6	5	8	13
Feb. 89	6	5	7	8	4	2	6	4	7	13
Mar. 89	6	5	7	6	4	3	6	4	10	10
Apr. 89	5	4	6	5	4	3	6	4	6	7
May 89	4	3	5	3	3	2	5	4	6	3
June 89	4	2	6	4	2	1	5	3	7	6
July 89	4	2	6	4	2	0	5	2	7	6
Aug. 89	5	3	6	5	2	1	6	2	7	9
Sept. 89	4	3	6	4	2	0	6	2	7	8
Oct. 89	4	2	6	3	1	1	6	0	6	7
Nov. 89	4	2	6	3	1	0	6	0	7	7
Dec. 89	4	1	6	3	1	-1	6	0	7	6
Jan. 90	4	1	7	2	0	-2	7	1	7	5
Feb. 90	4	0	7	2	1	-3	7	1	7	5
Mar. 90	5	1	7	1	2	0	6	0	8	3
Apr. 90	4	0	6	1	1	-2	6	1	8	2
May 90	4	2	6	2	1	-2	6	2	7	2
	Ten Year Annual Growth Rate, Percent									
	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	4	4

INDEXES, ELEVEN COUNTRIES, 1989-90

		U.S.		Canada		West Germany		France		U.K.		Italy		Japan		Australia		Taiwan, R.O.C.		Korea, R.O.K.		New Zealand	
		Indexes 1980 = 100																					
		Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
Jan.	89	126	139	133	125	118	124	132	130	122	121	112	118	145	160	140	130	187	219	213	218	110	115
Feb.	89	127	138	133	124	118	125	132	130	123	119	113	118	146	162	142	130	186	220	214	214	110	115
Mar.	89	127	139	133	125	118	126	133	130	123	119	112	119	149	160	142	131	188	225	214	218	110	116
Apr.	89	127	140	133	124	119	126	134	130	124	120	112	119	146	159	145	131	187	223	212	218	110	116
May	89	127	139	134	125	119	127	135	131	124	119	112	120	147	156	144	133	190	224	212	218	110	118
June	89	127	138	134	125	120	127	136	130	124	118	113	120	149	160	148	132	189	228	214	218	109	117
July	89	127	138	134	126	120	127	136	129	125	119	114	121	149	162	148	131	190	229	217	218	108	116
Aug.	89	128	139	135	126	121	126	137	129	126	119	115	122	150	165	148	132	191	231	220	224	107	117
Sept.	89	127	139	135	126	120	128	138	130	126	118	116	121	151	165	150	131	190	232	220	224	108	118
Oct.	89	127	139	135	125	121	128	139	129	126	117	116	120	152	166	149	130	192	232	221	220	109	119
Nov.	89	127	139	135	125	122	128	140	129	127	116	117	120	153	167	150	129	194	234	221	222	109	119
Dec.	89	128	138	135	126	123	130	141	127	128	116	118	120	154	167	151	129	193	234	224	221	110	119
Jan.	90	127	138	135	124	124	131	142	127	128	118	118	120	155	167	150	129	197	236	228	222	110	119
Feb.	90	128	136	136	124	125	132	142	127	128	117	119	120	156	168	150	129	193	247	235	231	111	118
Mar.	90	128	138	136	124	126	131	142	127	129	117	119	120	158	166	149	128	194	242	237	227	111	118
Apr.	90	128	137	136	123	126	131	143	129	130	117	120	120	159	166	150	127	191	239	237	224	111	117
May	90	128	140	135	123	127	131	144	130	130	117			159	167	150	129	194	238	232	227	113	118
June	90	128	139			126			130	130				160		150	127	192	234	234	222		
		Growth Rates, Percent																					
Jan.	89	4	4	4	0	6	8	9	7	6	4	1	1	7	14	11	5	9	10	7	9	-1	3
Feb.	89	4	2	4	-1	6	8	8	5	6	1	1	-1	7	15	12	4	6	8	7	4	-1	4
Mar.	89	4	4	4	0	6	8	9	5	6	1	0	1	10	10	10	5	7	11	7	7	-1	4
Apr.	89	4	4	3	-1	6	8	8	3	6	1	0	1	6	7	13	3	5	8	5	6	-1	5
May	89	3	2	4	0	5	7	8	4	5	0	0	1	5	3	10	6	7	7	4	5	0	6
June	89	2	1	3	0	5	6	8	3	5	-1	1	2	7	6	13	4	5	9	4	4	-2	5
July	89	2	0	3	1	4	6	8	0	5	-1	2	3	6	7	12	2	5	8	6	2	-4	2
Aug.	89	2	1	3	1	6	4	8	0	5	-1	3	4	7	10	11	3	5	9	8	7	-5	3
Sept.	89	1	0	3	1	4	5	8	1	5	-2	5	2	6	9	10	1	4	9	7	6	-3	4
Oct.	89	1	1	2	0	4	4	8	-1	5	-4	5	1	6	8	8	0	5	7	7	2	-1	5
Nov.	89	1	0	2	-1	5	4	8	-1	5	-4	6	1	7	8	7	-2	6	8	5	3	0	5
Dec.	89	1	-1	2	1	6	6	8	-3	5	-4	7	0	7	7	7	-3	4	7	8	1	2	3
Jan.	90	0	-1	2	-2	7	6	8	-3	5	-1	6	-1	7	6	5	-3	7	7	10	2	2	3
Feb.	90	1	-4	2	-1	8	6	7	-4	5	-1	7	-1	7	5	4	-3	3	15	15	10	3	1
Mar.	90	2	0	2	-1	8	5	6	-3	5	-2	6	-1	8	3	2	-4	2	9	15	5	4	0
Apr.	90	1	-2	2	-3	6	4	6	0	5	-1	6	1	9	2	2	-4	-1	5	13	2	2	-2
May	90	1	2	1	-3	8	4	6	2	5	-1			8	3	1	-2	2	3	7	4	6	1
June	90	2	1			5			3	4				8		0	-3	-1	-1	8	-1		
		Ten Year Annual Growth Rate, Percent																					
1976-86		3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	3	3	8	8	7	7	2	2